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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUMMARY

The present document provides an overview of developments in UNICEF programmes and operations in 1996. Following the introduction, chapter I focuses on global trends affecting children and the work of UNICEF, including poverty and aid; globalization, growth and equity; implementing the 20/20 Initiative; urbanization; decentralization; partnerships with non-governmental organ izations; and women and children as victims of violence. Chapter II reviews programmatic challenges during 1996, in particular supporting implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. An overview of activities in major programme areas is presented in chapter III. In addition to sectoral activities, capacity-building, community participation and sustainability; strengthening evaluation and monitoring; gender and development; and emergency operations are also discussed. Chapter IV reports on the following issues of special interest to the Executive Board: follow-up to international conferences; mainstreaming management excellence, including the integrated budget, harmonization of budget presentations, integrated budgeting, and UNICEF financial systems and processes; and audit and oversight. Information on resource mobilization, income and expenditure is contained in chapter V. The annex provides additional programme statistics.

* E/ICEF/1997/13.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
EPI	expanded programme on immunization
GID	Gender in Development
GIS	Geographical Information System
GNP	gross national product
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IATFs	inter-agency task forces
JCGP	Joint Consultative Group on Policy
LDCs	least developed countries
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MEP	Management Excellence Programme
MICS	multiple indicator cluster surveys
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIA	Office of Internal Audit
OLS	Operation Lifeline Sudan
ORT	oral rehydration therapy
PROMS	Programme Manager System
STDs	sexually transmitted diseases
TSG	technical support group
U5MR	under-five mortality rate
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

INTRODUCTION

1. The year 1996 was characterized by a series of events that gave special significance to the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF. Globally, it marked important milestones for children, as universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was virtually achieved and the United Nations Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly on the mid-decade goals of the World Summit for Children.

2. The year 1996 also saw the intensification of efforts directed at United Nations reform. UNICEF was an active, and often leading, participant in this process, working for a United Nations system that is more suited to the changing global environment - a system that is more streamlined, efficient and vital. UNICEF joined with other United Nations partners in improving efficiency, eliminating duplication and waste, increasing collaboration and harmonization, and enhancing programme effectiveness in the field. Significant improvements were realized through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and other inter-agency mechanisms, including the resident coordinator system. The over-arching objective of UNICEF reform activity remains the enhancement of capacity to further the well-being of children through effective and efficient programme delivery, global advocacy and other related and mutually reinforcing activities.

3. In Stockholm, efforts to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children was the focus of a global conference, finally breaking the official silence that has long shrouded this issue. The conference led to an agreement between Governments, non-governmental partners and international agencies on measures to put a stop to such crimes against children.

4. The issue of child labour gained heightened visibility as both UNICEF and the International Labour Organisation devoted major attention to the problem affecting millions of children, and many Governments took action towards its elimination. The UNICEF State of the World Children's 1997 report proposed six specific actions to end exploitative child labour.

5. As part of the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), a meeting sponsored by the Governments of the Netherlands and Norway took place in Oslo on implementation of the 20/20 Initiative. The meeting adopted the Oslo Consensus on 20/20 which highlighted the need to improve the monitoring of aid and public expenditure on basic social services.

6. The Progress of Nations recorded advances in the areas of health, nutrition, education and the situation regarding maternal mortality, as countries worked towards the attainment of the World Summit for Children goals.

7. In 1996, the ministers and heads of agencies responsible for development cooperation in Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries issued the report "Shaping the 21st Century: the contribution of development cooperation" in which the donor community outlined a global partnership to achieve ambitious but realizable goals regarding under-five mortality, maternal mortality, basic education, gender equity and poverty reduction for the year 2015. UNICEF is encouraged by the report because it not only extends many of the World Summit for Children goals beyond the year 2000, but also reaffirms the commitment of OECD countries to the approach of adopting goals to mobilize support at all levels to foster human development, real progress for children and the fulfilment of human rights.

8. The impact of armed conflict on children was documented extensively and described graphically in the study that Graça Machel presented to the General Assembly in late 1996. The tragic facts presented confirm that wars and armed

conflict at the end of the twentieth century are more brutal, more senseless and more devastating than ever before as increasingly civilians, especially women and children, have become the primary victims.

9. For UNICEF, 1996 was also the year when the Executive Board adopted the organization's first formal Mission Statement (E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1, decision 1996/1) and UNICEF staff adopted Guiding Principles for Staff Commitment and Conduct. It was the year when the organization moved the Management Excellence Programme (MEP) into high-gear implementation, in response to the Booz•Allen & Hamilton study.

10. The present report complements the "Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I), which was submitted to the Executive Board at its second regular session in March. It avoids repetition of information contained in that report as well as in the other main documents being considered at the present session, including "Ensuring children's rights to survival, development and protection in Africa" (E/ICEF/1997/15), "Children in need of special protection measures: report on steps for policy implementation" (E/ICEF/1997/16), the Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO) financial report for the year ended 30 April 1996 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.9) and the GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1997 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.8). It reports on the main global trends that affected children and the work of UNICEF during 1996; highlights those concerns which, in the Executive Director's opinion, constitute major challenges that UNICEF faced in the past year; and reports on activities of special interest to the Executive Board and on income and expenditure during 1996.

I. GLOBAL TRENDS AFFECTING CHILDREN AND THE WORK OF UNICEF

A. Poverty and aid

11. Two important global trends that directly affect children and the work of UNICEF are rising poverty and declining development assistance. According to the latest World Bank statistics, 1.3 billion people are poor, defined as people who live on less than $1.00 per day. Children are the single largest group of destitute people, and they are the most vulnerable to the negative effects of poverty. While the absolute number of poor people has been increasing, official development assistance (ODA) has declined both in real term and as a percentage of the combined gross domestic product of the OECD countries. In low-income countries and least developed countries in particular, ODA continues to provide critically needed resources to reduce poverty.

12. Although the proportion of poor people has declined slightly in relation to the global population, the absolute number of poor people has been increasing steadily over the past few years. In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of the population living in poverty has increased from 38.5 to 39.1 per cent between 1987 and 1993 and in Eastern Europe and Central Asia from 0.6 per cent in 1987 to 3.5 per cent in 1993. It also remains particularly high in South Asia (43.1 per cent in 1993). Overall, about one third of the population in developing countries continue to live in poverty in spite of the many efforts at structural adjustment, economic liberalization and increasing private capital flows. As it stands, the flow of private capital is concentrated on a few countries, and within them to a few sectors, making the link between this trend and efforts to reduce poverty very weak. The World Bank reported that, except in a few East Asian countries, the reduction in poverty has been insignificant and that high levels of income inequality persist (World Bank, 1996).

13. The significance of declining aid flows in the context of rising poverty places greater demands on UNICEF to focus scarce resources on the countries in greatest need and on the most disadvantaged children. It is in this light that

UNICEF has paid particular attention in 1996 to the allocation of general resources for programmes and the implementation of the Oslo Consensus on implementing the 20/20 Initiative. Evidence shows that structural adjustment has had the most positive results in countries that have managed to preserve budgetary allocations to basic social services such as primary health care and basic education.

B. Globalization, growth and equity

14. The well-being of children and women cannot be addressed outside the larger economic and social policy framework of growth, investment, employment and competition. As a result of economic reforms initiated during the 1980s, many countries have gained greater access to international markets. While these developments have resulted in accelerated growth in many countries, ironically they have also increased the vulnerability of the poorest groups in society, leading to greater disparities and inequalities. Together, globalization and economic liberalization have made poverty reduction particularly difficult. In spite of their positive impact on economic growth and employment generation, these trends have had no discernible impact on poverty reduction. Indeed, country reports show that an inequitable growth path can lead to a further increase in poverty (World Bank, 1996).

15. In many parts of the world, low-income wage earners are no longer able to keep their families out of poverty. Even full-time minimum wage earners in some developed countries have sunk deeper into poverty (The Annie Casey Foundation, 1996). The incomes of informal sector workers and small farmers have stagnated or declined because of factors such as land scarcity, overproduction of primary commodities, rapid urbanization and stiff international competition. The 1996 Human Development Report confirms that the world has become more polarized (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1996). It estimates that the assets of the world's wealthiest 358 people now exceed the combined annual income of the poorest 2.5 billion people. The income disparity between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest 20 per cent of the world's population has increased from 30:1 to 61:1 over the past 30 years (UNDP, 1996)

16. There are no easy social and economic policy alternatives that guarantee growth with equity, but it is poor economic and social policy for the world to allow millions of children to suffer so acutely in the face of abundant resources globally. The dimensions of poverty and equity need to be woven into the framework of good macroeconomic management. Safety nets and special poverty alleviation programmes cannot address the real problems of the poorest people, especially since they consistently underestimate the magnitude of the marginalized population. Experience shows that they have had mixed results in the number of people reached and the amount of income transferred to target groups. Monitoring the level and composition of public expenditure on social services is an important way of ensuring that poverty concerns are woven into macroeconomic management.

C. Implementing the 20/20 Initiative

17. Adjustment programmes do not seem to have had a particularly negative impact on public expenditure on the social sectors, but within these sectors more resources have been allocated to services that benefit the non-poor (World Bank, 1996). Because of the bias in favour of higher education, hospital care and urban piped water, there is need for special protection of public expenditure on basic social services. Since WSSD and the Oslo meeting, UNICEF has pursued the implementation of the 20/20 Initiative through global advocacy and country studies. Over the past year, UNICEF has collaborated with United Nations agencies - UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Bank in particular - in an effort to assist Governments and donors to

improve the monitoring and reporting of the resources allocated to basic social services. Studies are being conducted in, among others, Cameroon, the Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Namibia and the Niger to assess public expenditure on basic social services, determine the scope for budget restructuring and improve the efficiency of existing expenditures. These studies are country-led and are being carried out by national experts in collaboration with Governments. UNICEF has also collaborated with the World Bank in public expenditure reviews in several countries, particularly on social expenditure in Ethiopia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The share of UNICEF general resources allocated to basic social services in 1996 is estimated at 76 per cent, up from 74 per cent in 1995.

D. Urbanization

18. If current trends persist, one half of the population in developing countries will live in urban centres by the year 2015, up from 25 per cent in 1970. Last year, the urban population in the developing world is estimated to have increased by 58 million, putting extraordinary pressure on the social and economic infrastructure of cities.

19. The sheer magnitude is changing the impact of urbanization. In the past, a poor family could expect to improve its standard of living by migrating to the city. Today, this is no longer the case. The chances of finding a job or of having access to basic social services (water and sanitation in particular) have deteriorated. The growth of urban slums in most countries is testimony to the failure of cities to absorb the constant flow of migrants, to the growing problems of unemployment and poverty, and to the widening disparities in urban areas. Urban children are particularly vulnerable to the exploitation of poverty (youth unemployment, child labour, violence, drug trafficking, etc.). As the world's urban population continues to grow, UNICEF is developing an urban focus in programmes in order to reach the most vulnerable children in impoverished urban areas. The application of the strategy of community participation in these areas is particularly challenging because the urban poor often lack security of tenancy as well as the cultural and traditional strengths that are fundamental to the creation of a sense of community.

E. Decentralization

20. Another major change in the context in which UNICEF operates is the increasing reliance of national Governments on local authorities to deliver basic social services to their citizens. Local authorities and communities are playing an increasing role in the financing and provision of services despite their often weak capacity and limited resource base. UNICEF cooperation in countries is focused increasingly on strengthening local capacity and promoting community participation in the context of administrative and financial decentralization.

F. Partnerships with non-governmental organizations

21. Over the last few years, a number of trends have led to more cooperation between Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs): the increased decentralization of service delivery to local authorities; the increased proportion of development aid channelled through NGOs; and the reduction in public expenditure on basic social services linked to fiscal austerity and the implementation of structural adjustment programmes. UNICEF country offices continue to facilitate this growing interaction between Government and NGOs, especially as more attention is focused on ensuring programme sustainability through capacity-building and the empowerment of local communities. Data obtained from 65 per cent of field offices reveal that in 1995, UNICEF allocated approximately 12 per cent of its programme funds to cooperative projects with NGOs.

G. Women and children as victims of violence

22. Millions of women and children continue to be victims of violence and brutality daily, mainly at the hands of relatives and intimate partners, in both industrialized and developing countries. Battering at home constitutes the leading cause of injury for women of reproductive age. In some countries, it is a factor in maternal deaths and is by far the most universal form of violence against women. In the majority of the countries, domestic violence is not regarded as a criminal mattter. Thousands of child victims of violence abandon their homes to become casualties of further exploitation and violations on city streets.

23. The Graça Machel study on the "Impact of Armed Conflict on Children" underscored the fact that gender-based violence is not incidental to conflict. The rape of women and girls is now a weapon of war, and thousands of cases have been documented in conflict situations in all regions.

II. PROGRAMMATIC CHALLENGES DURING 1996: SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

24. As the twentieth century comes to a close, virtually every child, and the vast majority of women, can claim to be citizens of countries that have made legally binding commitments to promote and protect their human rights. As of March 1997, there are now 190 States Parties to Convention on the Rights of the Child and 156 States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

25. The "Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (E/ICEF/1997/14) has demonstrated that real progress is possible over relatively short periods when the political will to act and the commitment of resources converge. However, in spite of these achievements, children and women continue to be the world's poorest, most abused and marginalized citizens. An important challenge for UNICEF and the international community in the coming years is the need to bridge the gap between the principles of human rights that States have agreed to uphold for women and children and the violations of those same rights that cause preventable death and characterize the misery of daily life for millions of children and women worldwide.

26. Remarkable progress has been made in a number of areas such as immunization, the control of iodine deficiency disorders and diarrhoeal diseases, guinea worm eradication and the elimination of polio, but progress towards more complex goals such as reduction of under-five and maternal mortality, protection of the nutritional status of children or achievement of universal primary education has been slow. This information has reinforced the secretariat's conviction that the right-based approach to programming is an appropriate underpinning for the organization's future work.

27. Operational activities at country level in the past five years have demonstrated that the process of defining development goals for children and women, and working towards their achievement, builds a solid foundation for the implementation and monitoring of Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is also clear that national efforts to bring legislation in line with the principles of the Convention can help to develop essential linkages between the normative process of law reform and enactment, policy formulation and the operational activities that are intended to provide the essential social services to meet the basic needs of children and their families.

28. Programme strategies in a number of countries are beginning to reflect a better understanding of the need to mix strategies for improving access to and quality of services with legal, policy and public education initiatives that promote and protect the rights of all children. For example, links exist between high rates of maternal deaths and acute gender-based discrimination. It is also now understood that discrimination against infant and young girls is a significant contributing factor to continuing high rates of malnutrition in many countries. Discrimination also accounts for the fact that 60 per cent of 140 million 6- to 11-year-olds who are out of school globally are girls. Discrimination is also perhaps the most important underlying cause of the fact that women are the large majority of illiterate adults and that thousands of disabled children who can learn are deprived of this right.

29. It is also beginning to be understood in UNICEF that the goal of education for all cannot be achieved unless activities in the education sector are linked to efforts to end exploitative child labour that keeps millions children out of school. Programmes developed and implemented during 1996, particularly in Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, the Côte d'Ivoire and India, have demonstrated the links between child labour and education.

30. The deliberate targeting of children and women in armed conflict situations and the overall need to address their special vulnerability have led to the adoption by the Executive Board during 1996 of new rights-based policy approaches on children in need of special protection (decision 1996/27) and on the role of UNICEF in emergency operations (decisions 1996/2 and 1996/28). The present session of the Executive Board will review the implementation framework for the policy on children in need of special protection to show how the secretariat is working to ensure that concern for the protection of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children is becoming a mainstream concern of programme activities in sectors such as health, nutrition and education.

31. Many country programmes of cooperation are now making explicit programming decisions to focus the service provision strategy on the most marginalized, while giving importance to advocacy and capacity-building activities that address underlying causes of poverty and discrimination.

32. UNICEF country offices have reported interesting examples of "rights-based" programming. In India, there is increasing attention to children's participation, especially through bhishu panchayats (children's local government), where in states throughout the country, children have convened meetings of local government, identifying needs and suggesting specific actions which, in many cases, have been heeded and implemented by the adults in Government. In Maldives, the Unit for the Rights of the Children has successfully established an official network for reporting on the situation of children on all 201 inhabited islands. The trafficking and sale of children for child labour and child prostitution, especially young girls, is no longer hidden from view, and many countries are taking action to protect children from such intolerable forms of exploitation.

33. The regional management team in Eastern and Southern Africa, speaking on behalf of the countries in the region, recently concluded that efforts to address the protection and participation rights of children need priority attention if real progress towards the achievement of year 2000 goals is to be made. The UNICEF office in Mali is documenting the experience of developing the new cycle of cooperation with the Government within a human rights framework, starting with special attention to the rights of children and women.

34. At the Third Ministerial Conference of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on South Asian Children, held in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, last August, child protection issues received unprecedented attention from the

ministers when they agreed to combat both intercountry and intra-country trafficking of children for exploitative purposes and to galvanize legal and other interventions to prevent all forms of violence against children. The most significant addition in Rawalpindi to the set of goals that the region has been pursuing is the goal for the elimination of child labour, in bondage or other hazardous occupations, by the year 2000, and the elimination of all other forms of child labour from the region by the year 2010. The ministers also agreed on stronger region-wide actions for children, including strengthened efforts to implement a regional code on the marketing of breast milk substitutes and conducting coordinated national immunization days against polio.

35. In Latin America and the Caribbean, where significant progress has been made towards the attainment of the mid-decade goals, a follow-up process is under way to monitor progress towards the year 2000 goals and to identify new goals for the future. Signed by 30 countries in the region, the Santiago Accord identifies new priorities for the realization of children's rights, including the de-institutionalization of children and the establishment of preventive and rehabilitative systems for children in conflict with the law or in need of special protection; independent juvenile justice systems that uphold the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the elimination of hazardous and intolerable child labour; the establishment and strengthening of national bodies to monitor children's rights committees; and the establishment of national registries to monitor child abuse and family violence. While it is recognized that law reform may not have an immediate impact on the fulfilment of children's rights in countries where the law criminalizes children and works against the protection of their rights, law reform is considered an essential foundation for the implementation of the Convention and a necessary step to influence the reform of institutions working directly with children. By the end of 1997, the legal reform process will be practically complete in Latin America, and attention will be directed to policy reform and institutional restructuring.

36. In October 1996, at a meeting of the Caribbean Conference on the Rights of the Child, Governments and NGOs of the Caribbean Community issued the Belize Commitment to Action for the Rights of the Child, which the Prime Minister of Belize will present to the 1997 annual Caribbean Heads of Government meeting.

37. Women and children have been most severely affected by economic decline and the collapse of social systems in the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Baltic States region where the disintegration in family life, a rise in family violence and drug and alcohol abuse, and growing numbers of abandoned children, street children and children in institutions have been increasing trends. Added to this is the dramatic increase in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS cases reported in 1996 in Ukraine and Belarus. As was reported at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm, the problem of sexual exploitation of children in several countries is alarming. An exacerbating factor is the absence in the region of stabilizing forces in civil society, such as NGOs working in the social sector.

38. Ethnic conflicts in Tajikistan and Georgia have led to massive population movements that have placed children at grave risk and violated their basic rights. There are an estimated 1,450,000 internally displaced people and refugees in the Caucasus countries and a further 26,000 in Tajikistan. The conflict in Chechnya has also swollen the numbers of displaced and refugee people living in desperate circumstances.

39. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, nine countries have established special task forces or councils for children on the initiative of top leadership (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen), and several regional events have improved

country-level capacity for programming on child rights. A Consultation on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children brought together participants from Governments, NGOs and universities. There has been a marked increase of news coverage on the issue, and public awareness grew during the past year in several countries of the region.

40. A workshop on reporting and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was held in Tunis, with the participation of members of the Committee on Child Rights, involving Governments and UNICEF offices. In Djibouti, a code for the family is being developed which will be fully consistent with the Convention. The Palestinian Authority has given its strong support to the Convention and has achieved the principle of 20/20 in its allocations of funds. The Committees of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women also made a joint visit to Egypt to review accomplishments in children's and women's rights with Government leaders, NGOs and civil society. A project to incorporate the principles of the two Conventions in the curricula of law schools in six countries of the region is operational.

41. National Committees for UNICEF and the Regional Office for Europe cooperated with the Council of Europe in developing the European Strategy for Children, which the European Parliament adopted in 1996. The strategy calls for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the 40 member States. The UNICEF Regional Office for Europe also facilitated a meeting of ombudspersons for children which has led to the creation of a network of greater cooperation among these offices established for the protection of children's rights. National Committees and NGOs, with support from the regional office, are continuing to advocate for the inclusion of reference to children in the Maastricht Treaty. The agreements at the Stockholm World Conference against Commerical Sexual Exploitation of children has highlighted the importance of cooperation between countries in monitoring borders and in the adoption of extra-territorial legislation.

42. As UNICEF explores the various dimensions of its role in supporting implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, special emphasis is being placed on cooperation with other agencies of the United Nations system. Since the entry into force of the Convention, the UNICEF secretariat has developed close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights. Guided by the High Commissioner's Office during the past year, UNICEF continued to provide technical support to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and to facilitate thematic discussions among the Committee, national and regional governmental organizations and NGOs. In October 1996, UNICEF supported the Centre for Human Rights in organizing a consultation between the Committee on the Rights of the Child and technical specialists on the effects of the mass media on children, especially in relation to violence on television.

III. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN MAJOR PROGRAMME AREAS

A. Overview of sectoral activities

43. During this reporting period, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted policy decisions in the areas of health (decision 1996/31), special protection measures for children (decision 1996/27), emergencies (decisions 1996/2 and 1996/28) and follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (decision 1996/3).

44. At its 1997 annual session, the Executive Board will review reports on programme activities related to the achievement of the World Summit for Children goals, programmes in Africa and implementation measures in response to the

policy on children in need of special protection measures. Taken together, all of those documents present a comprehensive overview of UNICEF cooperation that is difficult to recapture in the present report. Therefore, the following section is intended to highlight activities in major programmes areas during 1996.

Strengthening health systems

45. UNICEF has continued to be a key partner in health systems reform. A major review of the Bamako Initiative was undertaken in several African and Asian countries, and operations research activities have been completed in 1995-1996. Results of the studies have been disseminated widely, and lessons learned from the process are applied by country programmes involved in health reform and strengthening of essential health services. Improving the quality of services has become an integrated component of the process aimed at revitalizing district health systems. Experiences of six countries in health reform - Bangladesh, Botswana, Ecuador, Indonesia, Zambia and Zimbabwe - have been reviewed. Lessons learned from the reform process in those countries have led to recommendations and the formulation of a two-year plan of action to be approved by the Executive Board.

46. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the State of World's Vaccines and Immunization, which highlighted the current development of a range of new and improved vaccines, while drawing attention to their unavailability and unaffordability for developing countries. In 1996, UNICEF continued to play a major role in vaccine procurement, with 1.2 billion doses procured - more than one half of which were oral polio vaccines for the global polio eradication programme. In order for developing countries to continue to access existing, improved and new vaccines, the report underlined the necessity "to work closely with the vaccine industry to ensure that commercial interests are carefully balanced against the need to provide equal access to vaccines for the world's children".

47. To ensure sustainability of efforts to prevent and treat the main diseases responsible for childhood illnesses and death, such as acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and malnutrition, UNICEF and WHO have promoted an integrated approach to the prevention and management of childhood illnesses (Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses). In order to better monitor the health status of children and women, UNICEF, in partnership with WHO, has strengthened its support to the implementation of a Geographical Information System (GIS) at the country level. Initially implemented for the monitoring of guinea worm disease in 20 African countries, GIS has been gradually expanded to other programmes such as immunization surveillance, maternal mortality monitoring and to other regions such as Asia.

Maternal mortality

48. In 1996, UNICEF released new estimates for maternal mortality in The Progress of Nations. These revised estimates, based on 1990 data, were developed jointly with WHO and provide a more consistent and substantiated baseline against which to measure progress towards the maternal mortality reduction goal. The revised estimates indicate a world-wide total of 585,000 deaths per year, almost 20 per cent higher than previously thought. These figures have served to raise awareness and reinvigorate activities to reduce maternal mortality.

49. In response, UNICEF programmes gave heightened attention to the goal of maternal mortality reduction. There is now a common understanding of the major immediate causes of maternal deaths and of health interventions required to significantly reduce women's risk of dying during childbirth or of

pregnancy-related causes, including increased access to family planning services, pregnancy-related health care and emergency obstetric services in the case of complications.

50. UNICEF has reinforced cooperation with several agencies working towards the reduction of maternal mortality, notably WHO, UNFPA, the World Bank, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the Population Council, associations of health professionals, and training and research institutions internationally and at country level. A number of countries, notably Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mali, Romania and Viet Nam, have initiated programmes that combine improved training of midwives, better access to family planning and women's health services, and improved emergency obstetric care.

Adolescent health

51. Young people's health is a relatively new priority for UNICEF, but it has been identified as a UNICEF priority in a growing number of countries such as Benin, the Caribbean countries, the Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. UNICEF has identified programme priorities for this target population group through a technical support group (TSG). Programme priorities include national planning and policies for youth health, school health programmes, youth-friendly health services, youth NGOs, and news and entertainment.

52. Adolescents are seriously affected by HIV/AIDS — more than one half of the new HIV infections occur among young people between 15 and 24 years of age — and STDs — 1 in 20 sexually active adolescents worldwide contracts an STD. UNICEF has reinforced its involvement in AIDS prevention globally through the coordination mechanism of the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, and at the country level through the implementation of multisectoral approaches, including HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities targeted at women and young people. In particular, UNICEF has supported several school-based interventions in Thailand, Uganda and Zimbabwe; has been involved in a major communication project on HIV/AIDS with Soul City in South Africa; and is working on this issue at a subregional level in the Mekong project in South-East Asia.

Nutrition and household food security

53. All but 15 developing countries in the world have now introduced programmes to iodize all edible salt to combat iodine deficiency, and some of these 15 countries are expected to introduce large-scale salt iodization in the near future. During 1996, because of the world-wide increase in the use of iodized salt, it is estimated that up to 12 million newborns were spared from any risk of mental retardation due to iodine deficiency. Statistics on cretinism are extremely difficult to obtain, but based on iodized salt usage, the number of babies born in 1996 who will suffer from cretinism due to iodine deficiency is likely to be less than 40,000 worldwide.

54. Many countries have dramatically reduced the incidence of severe vitamin A deficiency which results in blindness, for example, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Viet Nam. However, the prevalence of mild and moderate vitamin A deficiencies, which have no obvious clinical signs, has been recognized to be far more widespread and to have more serious consequences for child survival. Therefore, the goals have been modified to focus on ensuring that all children receive an adequate intake of vitamin A rather than eliminating clinical deficiency. Linking vitamin A supplementation with national immunization days has been a highly successful strategy and has resulted in very high "coverage" of vitamin A in several large countries, including ,for example, Bangladesh. In Mauritania, an innovative "health and nutrition day" immunized children and, at the same

time, administered both vitamin A capsules and an anti-helminthic drug. In Bolivia, UNICEF has supported the introduction of vitamin A fortified sugar as a cost-effective way of increasing vitamin A intakes in the medium term, and similar approaches are being considered in the Philippines and in Uganda.

55. Several UNICEF country offices in Latin America and in the Middle East are working with Governments and the food industry to support the introduction of iron fortification programmes. In Venezuela, an evaluation of legislation which required all wheat and maize flour to be fortified with iron and B vitamins concluded that this programme had halved the prevalence of anaemia in children between the ages of 7 and 15 years at a time when economic conditions were deteriorating. In 1996, representatives from the Government and flour industry from 11 countries of the MENA region agreed that the fortification of wheat flour with iron should be pursued as a way to reduce anaemia in the region.

56. During 1996, the number of baby-friendly hospitals almost doubled, from 4,282 to 8,319. This exponential growth is a result of a strong partnership with Governments, NGOs and individual hospitals. It represents significant progress towards meeting one of the operational targets of the Innocenti Declaration - a global strategy that guides UNICEF work on protecting, promoting and supporting breast-feeding. Where a link with the community to continue support is well established, meeting the target will ensure that millions of babies are born in hospitals that provide an appropriate environment and the support for mothers to breast-feed their newborns.

Basic education

57. UNICEF consolidated its major initiative in girls' education, focusing on efforts to make education affordable for Governments and parents; revising curricula and learning materials to eliminate stereotypes; transforming the learning environment to attract and retain girls in schools; recruiting more women teachers; ensuring that teacher-education curricula include gender discrimination issues; and encouraging greater community participation. The Canadian International Development Agency, the Government of Norway and the Rockefeller Foundation are among the partners for the girls' education initiative. A programme to strengthen NGOs in Africa to support and provide girls' education has been initiated. To date, funding has been secured for 18 countries, although 34 countries are already committed to the programme.

58. The mid-decade review of educational achievement took place in Amman in 1996. UNICEF was tasked by the Education for All Forum to organize the Mid-Decade Reviews of Education for Africa and two meetings were held in 1996 - in Yaounde for West and Central Africa and in Johannesburg for Eastern and Southern Africa. These reviews attracted the participation of many African ministers of education, who pledged to give priority in their respective countries to the collection and analysis of education statistics and to use these data in planning. They also committed to examine issues related to the cost and financing of education, especially to ensure girls' education. During this mid-decade period, there was little improvement in closing the gender gap in improving the quality of learning in primary education.

59. UNICEF assisted in re-establishing education programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda after the disruptions caused by the civil conflicts. The "edukit", developed for education in emergency situations, is now being expanded to combine the provision of basic materials for teaching and learning with in-service teacher training for community teachers.

60. The continuous assessment programme in Swaziland and the strengthening of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF joint programme to monitor learning in China, Lebanon, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco

and Oman are good examples of joint efforts to improve the quality of education. UNICEF has supported the International Centre for Educational Evaluation at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, to offer short-term courses for Nigeria and neighbouring countries.

61. Media technology has also been used to support parent education. Four animated cartoon videos have been adapted for different audiences in Iraq, Jordan, Tunisia, Turkey and Viet Nam. They are also being used in the United States.

62. The "Joyful Learning" programme in India, which is based on participatory approaches including parents, children, teachers and local authorities, utilizes imaginative teaching and learning methodologies to make the learning environment child-friendly. The community school programme in Zambia enables children who are unable to find a school place to gain access to primary education through the mobilization of community resources. The Ministry of Education of Zambia provides textbooks for children in this programme.

Water, environment and sanitation

63. During 1996, country programmes in Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guinea, Honduras, Mali, Panama and Viet Nam demonstrated renewed programme emphasis on efforts to promote sanitation and hygiene education at the primary-school level. In Burkina Faso and Guinea-Bissau, new approaches to health and sanitation at the community level are being developed in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the International Water and Sanitation Centre in the Netherlands. The Swedish International Development Authority is helping UNICEF to strengthen sanitation programmes in the Southern African region and also in introducing appropriate sanitation technology in the West and Central Africa region. Consensus has been reached with the World Bank on collaboration in several countries in Africa. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will soon be signed between the two organizations to accelerate progress in household water security and environmental sanitation in the context of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa.

64. In collaboration with British ODA, the International Nutrition Foundation for Developing Countries and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, a guide on Approaches and Method for Assessing Water- and Sanitation-related Hygiene Practices will be published shortly. These tools, along with the "Sanitation Handbook", being finalized with technical support from the United States Agency for International Development through its Environmental Health Programme, will enable country offices to improve quality assurance in country programmes. A joint strategy for water supply and sanitation has been developed with WHO and was considered at the recent meeting of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy.

65. As part of its environmental activities, UNICEF signed an MOU with the United Nations Environment Programme in March 1997. A joint advocacy paper on lead poisoning and its effect on children has also been developed by the two agencies. Close partnership with environmental NGOs such as the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the World Conservation Union are under consideration. In India, UNICEF renamed the water and sanitation programme "child's environment" and started the shift towards the concept of community management of water environment by launching a fresh-water study in five different ecozones in India, in collaboration with WWF. The study aims to identify the needs of communities in managing water environment since the emphasis is now on household water security and not merely on water supply.

B. Capacity-building, community participation and sustainability

66. In 1994, UNICEF issued guidelines for assessing programme sustainability: "A Ten-Point Test of Sustainable Programming". These guidelines remain valid and have taken on new importance as the linkage between country programmes and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are better understood. It is now a well-established programme principle that national capacity-building and empowerment are essential for sustainability and that it is important to build on existing local capabilities, paying special attention to strategies that engage families, communities and local authorities in problem analysis, the search for solutions and assessment of programme effectiveness.

67. Good examples of countries where strategies for improved programme sustainability are well developed include Uganda's health strategy, which focuses on improving the capacity of communities to identify priority health problems and needs and to take action. The community-based approach in the United Republic of Tanzania has expanded from the original focus on nutrition and health to include community-based education and HIV/AIDS prevention, while also expanding geographical coverage. The capacity-building approach of the programme has shown successful results in reducing severe and moderate malnutrition by 60 and 40 per cent, respectively, and has encouraged families to address broader survival, development, protection and participation issues. In Brazil, the community participation approach is linked to the human rights agenda in general, and child rights specifically. Its focus is on legal assistance to support community interaction with public authorities; citizenship education for adults, adolescents and children; and strengthening social movements and action with respect to rights. The UNICEF office in Brazil has been active in creating and supporting Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents and Guardianship Councils, both critical in the development of government policies to ensure the rights of children and adolescents.

68. Participatory methodologies are also being adopted by several countries and influence every aspect of programming. Planning exercises, training workshops and evaluation activities have started to use participatory and empowering methodologies. Consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, India's programme supports a concerted effort to place the recognition of child rights within the context of broader community action. This involves working with women's groups and elected local bodies, training for teamwork and community capacity-building, and fostering community analysis and monitoring activities. Egypt is focusing on reaching the unreached in the most impoverished, underserved rural and urban areas. Emphasis is on increasing communities' roles in decision-making, local capacity-development, local monitoring and participation in all phases of planning and implementation activities. Ghana's new community-based development strategy focuses on disadvantaged districts. An empowering approach of dialogue and joint planning with communities is being initiated, complemented by capacity-building. Indonesia has adopted an integrated community-based planning approach as a result of the increasing commitment to decentralized authority and responsibility for planning and budgetary activities. Zambia is focusing on strengthening community and family capacity to protect and care for children. The aim is to empower communities with the skills and methods to identify priority needs and to take action.

69. In order to document best practices and lessons learned in community participation and empowerment, a study is under way to identify and analyse the different approaches to community participation in several country programmes. A full report is anticipated by December 1997.

C. Strengthening evaluation and monitoring

70. To ensure that strategic planning and corporate policy-making are more closely linked to lessons learned and evaluation findings, in 1996 the Evaluation and Research Office was integrated with the Offices of Planning and Coordination, and of Social Policy and Economic Analysis to form the Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning. In the past year, the main thrust of evaluation and monitoring work has been: (a) monitoring progress towards the mid-decade goals for children; (b) learning lessons from UNICEF programme experiences, with an emphasis on health (Bamako Initiative), HIV/AIDS and emergencies; (c) reinforcing capacity through staff training and further database development; (d) integrating monitoring and evaluation into country programme preparation through better planning; and (e) broadening evaluation methodologies, with a focus on child rights, and participatory evaluation.

71. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation is central to the implementation of MEP, which recognizes the important contribution of these activities to improved oversight and accountability, better programme performance, and organizational learning and strategic planning. For example, the implementation of the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan, already a part of all programme submissions, is likely to be more consistent now that it will be included in the country programme management plan and can be tracked more systematically through the new Programme Manager System (PROMS).

72. Monitoring the status of children was an area of significant achievement in 1996, culminating in a world-wide effort to monitor national progress towards the mid-decade goals for children, reported in the Secretary-General's mid-decade report to the General Assembly and the UNICEF "Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (E/ICEF/1997/14), which is submitted to the Executive Board at the present session. UNICEF supported the collection and analysis of data in more than 100 countries, nearly 70 of which gathered data using the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) method, an effective and economical methodology developed by UNICEF, working with WHO, UNESCO, UNFPA, the United Nations Statistical Office and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In many countries, this effort contributed to the strengthening of national statistical capacity for the collection and analysis of social data, and there are requests for its continuation, especially from African statistical offices and the Economic Commission for Africa.

73. Approaches to country programme evaluation were developed further in 1996. Guidelines were refined based on recent experience and were applied in the evaluation of the Haiti country programme (1992-1996). The evaluation provided insights into ways in which the country programme adapted to the changing role of State and civil society during the different stages of the crisis and transition period, and yielded lessons of wider application to the UNICEF response in complex emergencies in 1996. This was part of the special emphasis given to complex emergencies in 1996, where the rapidly changing contexts, the difficulties in access and insecurity, and the need for frequent adjustments in approach make monitoring and evaluation especially important.

74. A new more user-friendly Windows-based version of the evaluation database containing more than 6,000 studies and evaluations, was released to country offices in 1996, and an updated version will be distributed on CD-ROM shortly. This has the potential to be a powerful tool, permitting both UNICEF and other partners to access lessons and evaluation findings from world-wide experience. One innovative aspect of that experience, the TSG Initiative, was the subject of an evaluation conducted by the Diakonhjemmets International Centre, Norway. The report provides valuable insights into the process of organizational learning and of change within UNICEF and with key partners. It provides a positive assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the TSG Initiative as a

strategy for accelerating the learning process and rapidly developing a set of programmatic responses (in this case to HIV/AIDS) to new areas of organizational concern.

75. As part of the ongoing effort to improve inter-agency coordination and harmonization, UNICEF worked with the other JCGP agencies to produce and widely distribute "Common Guidelines on Monitoring and Evaluation", which is relevant for project- and programme-level monitoring and evaluation and includes recommendations regarding mid-term reviews of country programmes. Another joint JCGP activity, the development of the common country assessment, was carried forward to the field application phase. Participation in the Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation continued to provide an opportunity for coordination and information-sharing among the evaluation offices of the United Nations system and Bretton Woods institutions.

76. In 1996, efforts to strengthen monitoring and evaluation in Africa began to show results. Regional workshops for country office monitoring and evaluation staff provided technical orientation on participatory evaluation, policy analysis, participatory rural appraisal, MICS implementation and other topics, and also strengthened intercountry networking and information exchange. Priority support was usually given to countries preparing Board submissions to help strengthen the quality of the monitoring and evaluation plan for the new country programme and to contribute to the more rigorous identification of lessons learned from the past programme.

D. Gender and development

77. In most countries, the momentum of the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, resulted in political commitments for follow-up through new policies and programmes for women and girls. It provided excellent opportunities at the country level for the mainstreaming of gender issues in several of the new country programmes of cooperation approved by the Executive Board in September 1996. The country programmes of Belize, the Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Namibia and Nepal have set clear goals for disparity reduction and support to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and have emphasized the need for gender-sensitive monitoring of programmes. They propose multisectoral programmes for achieving the goals of girls' education, the reduction of maternal mortality, the prevention of teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS and the eradication of discriminatory practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage.

78. A regional strategy was adopted for addressing female genital mutilation in four countries of Eastern Africa - Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Somalia. The emphasis is on the community-based participatory approaches involving girls and women staff from health, education and communication sectors. Similar plans are being implemented in Egypt and through the Child-Friendly Village Initiative in the Sudan. The lessons learned will be valuable for wider expansion in other areas and for replication in neighbouring countries.

79. In response to growing concern about domestic violence against women and girls in South Asia, a regional project is identifying women activists and collating success stories of grass-roots organizations to serve multiple purposes. They include the dissemination of information in all seven countries, development of strategies against violence in the country programmes, and intra-and intercountry networking of activists, service providers and lawyers in the region. Similar NGO-led initiatives in the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania have organized special events and public awareness campaigns on domestic violence, engaging women and men in discussing the issue of women's rights.

80. Progress on addressing the needs and rights of adolescent girls has been slow. The wide spectrum of problems faced by older girls and their often complex family environments present daunting challenges for policy makers - high drop-out levels; increasing incidence of teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS; vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as to harmful practices; poor nutrition; and overwork, with little prospects for change in most developing countries. Innovative programmes of non-formal education, nutrition, counselling for teen pregnancy and educational activities to prevent HIV/AIDS are attempting to address these problems in countries such as Botswana, China, Costa Rica, the Eastern Caribbean, India, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria and Peru.

81. The Executive Director's report to the Economic and Social Council, submitted to the Executive Board at the previous session, presented information on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNICEF is an active partner in the preparation of national plans for implementation of the Platform for Action. At the regional level, UNICEF collaborated with other United Nations agencies in the organization of regional meetings and events. For instance, in early 1996, the Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific collaborated with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in the organization of a regional meeting of government delegations to discuss follow-up of the regional plan and national plans of action. Later in June, the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean collaborated with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and supported a meeting of national focal points for women, NGOs and others to develop a regional plan built on partnerships and NGO collaboration. The Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa joined the Government of Uganda and the Organization of African Unity in organizing a regional conference on women's education and literacy in Kampala in September 1996. The Kampala Declaration, adopted by delegates from 35 African countries, contains clear commitments by Governments to reduce gender disparities in education and provides guidelines for future action on girls' and women's education.

82. At the global level, UNICEF is a member of the Secretary-General's Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the JCGP Gender in Development (GID) subgroup. It has contributed to the system-wide medium-term plan for follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, within the perspective of its mandate. UNICEF is involved with many inter-agency collaborative activities. More recently, as part of the JCGP GID subgroup, a report on the "Responsibility and Accountability of United Nations Agencies" in the mainstreaming of gender issues was prepared. The recommendations of the study were discussed by the Inter-Agency Committee in March 1997 for system-wide action.

E. Emergency operations

Coordination of humanitarian assistance

83. UNICEF collaboration with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) developed at the policy level and in practical ways during 1996. As a contribution to a DHA-led initiative on the impact of sanctions, UNICEF commissioned a study, which is ongoing, to identify criteria for measuring the impact of sanctions on the well-being of children.

84. DHA coordinates the United Nations response on land-mines. Within this framework, UNICEF is developing standards and guidelines on land-mine awareness.

85. UNICEF has also collaborated with DHA in assessments and reviews of humanitarian operations, the most important of which during the year was the review of Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). While this generally was supportive

of the work that UNICEF and OLS was doing, and recognized for its beneficial impact on children, it raised further challenges for UNICEF activities the area of promotion and protection of children's rights caught in or displaced by conflict, leading to a review of UNICEF programme strategies.

86. Practically, UNICEF supported the coordination system through the secondment of staff to DHA at both headquarters and field locations. Currently, the humanitarian coordinators in the Great Lakes Region and in Iraq are senior UNICEF staff. In northern Iraq and in the southern sector of OLS, where UNICEF plays a lead agency role, it has provided additional staff support for management of UNICEF operations, thus allowing the designated coordinators to spend more time on their inter-agency functions. Three additional staff, including the Director of the Inter Agency Support Branch, carry out key functions at DHA headquarters in New York and Geneva.

87. UNICEF contributes to the Economic and Social Council process and would like to see a stronger clearer coordination mechanism in place, with an enhanced role for the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

88. Increasing emphasis is being given to partnerships with United Nations agencies, NGOs and others in order to promote the effective fulfilment of these policies. Among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Save the Children Alliance and DHA are key partners.

Follow-up to the Anti-War Agenda and the Graça Machel study

89. The promotion of the Anti-War Agenda in the 1996 State of the World's Children report and the presentation of the Machel study at the United Nations General Assembly both provided important opportunities to raise the profile of children in conflict and signalled a certain change in direction for UNICEF. Using the Convention on the Rights of the Child as its guiding framework, UNICEF is seeking a much greater focus on ensuring the fulfilment of child rights in conflict; protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination; and promoting humanitarian principles. The report on "Children and women in emergencies: strategic priorities and operational concerns for UNICEF" (E/ICEF/1997/7), approved by the Board in January 1997 (E/ICEF/1997/12 (Part I), decision 1997/7), provides the policy framework for UNICEF emergency operations, endorses the recommendations of the Machel report and sets out practical actions that UNICEF is planning or already implementing in its emergency programmes.

90. Within that policy framework, further policy and strategy formulation is now being developed in many of the areas highlighted in the Machel report, for example, the protection of children, sanctions, land-mine advocacy, and internally displaced and unaccompanied children. UNICEF is active globally on such issues as the campaign to ban anti-personnel land-mines and to adopt the Optional Protocol on the recruitment of children. Where possible, this is being done in collaboration with other agencies, particularly UNHCR in the critical areas of child protection and unaccompanied children.

91. In order to support the implementation of these policies and strategies at the country level, guidelines and best practices are already being prepared in the areas of child soldiers and land-mine awareness. A training module on humanitarian principles and protection has also been developed in collaboration with the Complex Emergency Training Initiative, which brings together United Nations agencies and NGOs and is to be introduced from mid-1997. The revised UNICEF emergency handbook, which will contain practical guidelines on all of these issues, is currently in its final stages of preparation and will significantly aid field staff in their ability to implement programmes in these areas.

92. A few examples from the field illustrate some current UNICEF initiatives. Following the initiative established in southern Sudan, in Burundi, UNICEF signed an agreement with the Government on the Protection of the Burundian Child and is now establishing a child protection programme. In Afghanistan, citing the non-discriminatory nature of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF withdrew its support from schools which did not allow girls to attend. In Liberia, UNICEF is actively involved in the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers in the context of an intensive child rights advocacy strategy.

93. Recognizing that internal capacity-building is essential to ensure the ability of the organization to follow up and implement the recommendations of the Machel report and the Anti-War Agenda, UNICEF has made the protection of child rights in complex emergencies one of its global training priorities. The Office of Emergency Programmes is working closely with the Training and Staff Development Section to promote this training.

94. UNICEF fully supports the recommendation of the Machel report that a Special Rapporteur for Children in Armed Conflict be appointed. It has already had extensive discussions with UNHCR and the Commission for Human Rights to discuss support envisaged to the office of the Special Rapporteur once it has been established.

IV. ISSUES OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Follow-up to international conferences

95. UNICEF participated actively in the three inter-agency task forces (IATFs) and the Committee on Women and Gender Equality working to develop United Nations system-wide mechanisms for implementation of the priority goals and objectives emerging from recent international conferences. In accordance with their original objectives for 1997, the task forces will produce products to further coordinated delivery of support at regional and country levels, as part of the resident coordinator system, so that United Nations field offices may assist Governments and national institutions more effectively in their pursuit of conference commitments.

96. The major product of the IATF on Employment and Sustainable Development is a synthesis report to be used, in particular, by the resident coordinator system. The report summarizes lessons learned at the country level and across countries with a view to: (a) suggesting ways of improving inter-agency collaboration in the future; (b) and providing a clear understanding of the different ingredients that work for the promotion of employment and sustainable livelihoods in specific situations and of the necessary indicators for monitoring success in these areas. This synthesis report will result primarily from country reviews addressing factors related to employment and sustainable livelihoods in seven case studies reflecting a variety of different levels of development and prospects for drawing lessons.

97. The country reviews were supplemented by one-day national dialogue workshops bringing together government policy makers, representatives of civil society, workers' and employers' representatives, members of national research institutions, the media and the donor community. These workshops were used to disseminate results, achieve consensus on recommendations and develop requirements for future support by the United Nations system.

98. The IATF on Basic Social Services For All is producing six end-products: (a) guidelines for the United Nations resident coordinator system; (b) a wall chart of basic indicators for social services; (c) reports on best

practices/lessons learned in donor collaboration in assistance to the social sector; (d) a pocket card on advocacy for basic social services; (e) a set of indicators to measure implementation of recommendations emanating from the recent conferences in the social sector; and (f) a compendium of conventions and treaties pertaining to the social sector.

99. The IATF on the Enabling Environment for Economic and Social Development has worked to establish a synthesis of best practices or lessons learned with an aim to: (a) clarify the elements of an enabling environment for economic and social development; and (b) establish mechanisms for improving inter-agency coordination in support of such an environment. Working within two subgroups, the Macroeconomic and Social Framework team is examining the role of United Nations system agencies in assisting countries to create an appropriate social and macroeconomic framework through case studies in five countries selected as a representative mix - Hungary, Mexico, Uganda, Viet Nam and Zambia. The Capacity Development for Governance team is preparing a consolidated report, based on studies undertaken by its member agencies, outlining best practices and taking into account the mandate and comparative advantage of each agency.

100. All IATFs took into account several cross-cutting themes and collaborated in their further development. These included indicators and data, gender and sustainability.

101. Since establishment of the above-mentioned process, UNICEF field offices, as part of the resident coordinator system, have already begun to use the framework of the task forces as a guide in organizing complementary country-level follow-up. This activity has fully involved national and local authorities, NGOs and United Nations system partners. While these activities will accelerate with finalization of guidelines by the IATFs, there are already good examples:

(a) Madagascar: Thematic groups established for basic social services, employment and sustainable livelihoods, food security and access for all to income and resources. In addition, there are several cross-cutting themes, including women, capacity-building and sustainability;

(b) Lebanon: Task forces established mirroring those at the headquarters level, with UNICEF as the initial convener of the basic social services group;

(c) India: Four inter-agency working groups established in gender and development, education, population and development, and HIV/AIDS. UNICEF is participating widely as well as serving as co-lead agency for the first two groups noted;

(d) Kazakstan: Four thematic groups established for social services, advancement of women, employment and sustainable development. UNICEF is serving as co-chair in the first two groups noted;

(e) El Salvador: Several ad hoc coordinating mechanism were established for follow-up to international conferences, including population and development, social development and gender in development.

102. It is expected that the establishment of follow-up mechanisms and their activities will accelerate rapidly with completion of the work of the headquarters-based IATFs and dissemination of their guidelines and other support mechanisms. The success or failure of UNICEF and system-wide follow-up to the international conferences will be based on tangible and measurable results in the field.

B. Mainstreaming management excellence

103. By mid-1996, mainstreaming MEP became the focus of the secretariat's reform efforts. MEP teams and external consultants completed work on an accountability framework for UNICEF and made recommendations on structures and systems to support decentralized UNICEF operations. These recommendations were reviewed internally, tested against the Booz•Allen & Hamilton reform proposals and discussed with the Executive Board, making it possible to identify the priorities for moving ahead with reform during 1996/1997. As originally planned, the Management Task Force disbanded in December 1996, and the Office of the Executive Director assumed responsibility for MEP monitoring and oversight, while line managers throughout the organization assumed the primary responsibility for implementing the change programme.

104. Throughout this period, the secretariat and the Executive Board maintained continuous and constructive dialogue on the organizing principles guiding MEP and on the required changes to structures, operating systems and the major work processes of the organization, especially those related to the management of programmes, people and financial resources.

105. Two important products of MEP implementation during this period include the development and field testing of PROMS and the development of the first integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices.

106. The first integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.5 and Corr.1) was approved by the Board at its second regular session in April 1996 (decisions 1996/10-1996/14).

107. UNICEF worked closely with UNDP and UNFPA throughout 1996 on the harmonization of budgets. This exercise resulted in the preparation of a report that was submitted to the Board at its first regular session in January 1997 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.3 and Add.1) and approved (decision 1997/5). This harmonizes the budget presentation, definitions and methodologies of UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA and will be implemented in the preparation of the 1998-1999 biennial support budget which will be submitted to the Board at its first regular session of 1998.

108. A report on "Integrated budgeting in UNICEF" (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.4) was submitted and approved by the Board at its first regular session of 1997 (decision 1997/3). This report reflected modifications in the UNICEF integrated budgeting format required to be consistent with the harmonization of budget guidelines.

109. The consulting firm of KPMG/Peat Marwick completed its study of UNICEF financial systems and processes. This resulted in recommendations for a new financial system, strengthened organizational structure and revised business processes. UNICEF identified a commercial financial system product that meets the needs of the entire organization, including the commercial functional requirements of GCO and Supply Division. Implementation of the new system commenced in March 1997.

110. UNICEF continued to participate actively in the Inter-agency Working Party on Financial Statements organized by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions in 1994.

C. Audit and oversight

111. During 1996, UNICEF completed 30 audits (25 in country offices and 5 at headquarters). The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) was strengthened during the year with the addition of two Professional posts and additional financial

resources to enable UNICEF to use external expertise, as required. The new Director of OIA was recruited, and other vacant posts have been filled. There is now increased attention to the quality of audits, and a new strategy has been developed to determine how UNICEF should approach audits. There is now a more effective way of identifying which offices and headquarters functions to audit, using various risk factors such as the size of suspense account balances and late submission of accounts. Greater attention is paid to larger field offices and key headquarters divisions such as Supply Division. Most audits have identified the need to strengthen oversight and control, and steps are being taken to improve internal controls, oversight and supervision. The audit approach is increasingly participatory and is helping to guide the development of office improvement plans and find solutions to underlying problems.

112. There has also been a focus on determining the scope for efficiency improvements. Innovative work is under way to assess the quality of programme implementation, in close consultation with those responsible for guiding programme evaluations. An important emphasis is placed on ensuring best value for money in all aspects of UNICEF transactions and programme activities.

113. The secretariat is tracking implementation of audit recommendations more closely and undertaking follow-up visits in cases where there are concerns regarding implementation. There was an important follow-up audit of the Kenya country office in 1996. By January 1997, the auditors were able to confirm that all but 3 of the 67 audit recommendations had been implemented.

V. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION, INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

A. Mobilization of increased general resources

114. In a climate of declining ODA and levelled income prospects from main donors, it is particularly pertinent for UNICEF to strive for higher shares and nominal increases in general resource in order to maintain a high degree of flexibility in addressing priority issues of children as well as in maintaining the multilateral nature and quality of UNICEF operations. The concern about general resources has been brought to the attention of the Executive Board and National Committees on a number of occasions, including in the 1996 Executive Director's report (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part I)). More broadly, the issue of securing core funding on a predictable, assured and continuous basis is the topic of current discussions on United Nations reform and of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996, which UNICEF addressed in the annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I), chap. II).

115. The share of general resources increased from 53 per cent in 1995 to 58 per cent in 1996 owing an increase of $14 million in general resources income and the decline in total income caused primarily by a decline in emergency and supplementary funds income. UNICEF is grateful to those government donors which have increased their local currency general resources contributions for 1996, including Finland, the Netherlands, Japan, Norway and Denmark, among the top 10.

116. A number of initiatives have been taken to mobilize increased general resources. As part of a broader response, UNICEF is working with donors to identify contributions that can be allocated to general resources instead of supplementary funds when the special information and reporting needs of the donors can be met.

117. National Committees have suggested that if the present annual reporting mechanism for country programming for general resources were to be reconfigured to support their needs, it would improve their capacity to direct the money they raise to general resources. Over the past six months, the secretariat, in

agreement with the National Committees of Germany and the Netherlands, has adapted some specific components of the annual country reporting process to respond to their fund-raising needs on an experimental basis. Early indications are that this approach is workable, but it will need to be evaluated with the participating National Committees and the countries concerned.

B. Income

118. Total income for 1996 was $944 million. This was $84 million (8 per cent) less than the $1,026 million total income estimated in the 1996 medium-term plan (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10) and $67 million (7 per cent) less than total income in 1995. The decrease in total income was due mainly to the decline in emergency and supplementary funds income.

119. Table 1 below shows the breakdown of income by source. In 1996, UNICEF derived its income from two main sources: Governments and intergovernmental organizations, which contributed $607 million (64 per cent) of total income; and non-governmental/private sector sources, which provided $300 million (32 per cent). The balance of $37 million (4 per cent) came from United Nations agencies and other miscellaneous sources.

120. Measured in United States dollars, total contributions increased over 1995 for nine Governments. The United States remained the largest government donor to UNICEF, contributing a total of $143 million, and also increased its total contribution by $15 million over the prior year. The United States is also the top contributor to general resources. Its general resources contribution has been sustained at $100 million since 1993.

121. Sweden continues to be the second largest government donor and the largest contributor of supplementary funds contributions despite a decline in the amount of its total contribution.

122. The Netherlands and Norway maintain their positions as third and fourth largest government, donors followed by Japan, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland and Finland, the latter two replacing Italy and Australia among the top 10. Together, these 10 government donors provided more than one half of the total UNICEF income in 1996. Among contributions from intergovernmental agencies, the European Union contributed $12 million.

123. The 1997 UNICEF Annual Report lists the contributions from Governments, National Committees and the private sector by country.

Table 1. Total UNICEF income by source of funding

(In millions of United States dollars)

	1993	1994	1995	1996
Governments	539	658	655	607
Non-governmental/private sector	255	278	308	300
Other	72	70	48	37
Total	866	1 006	1 011	944

124. The breakdown of income by category or type of funding is provided in table 2 below. General resources income in 1996 was $551 million, $16 million (3 per cent) less than the amount of $567 million estimated in the 1996 medium-term plan, and $14 million (3 per cent) more than the actual in 1995.

Table 2. UNICEF income by type of funding

(In millions of United States dollars)

	1993	1994	1995	1996
General resources	509	535	537	551
Supplementary funds (regular)	187	257	311	287
Subtotal	696	792	848	838
Emergency supplementary funds	170	214	163	106
Total	866	1 006	1 011	944

125. Total supplementary funds income was $393 million in 1996. This was $66 million less than the medium-term plan projection of $459 million and $81 million less than the actual in 1995. Regular supplementary funds income amounted to $287 million in 1996. This was $24 million (8 per cent) less than in 1995 and $12 million (4 per cent) less than the target amount of $299 million in the medium-term plan. There was also a marked decline in the level of supplementary funding for emergency programmes. Total supplementary funds emergency income in 1996, amounting to $106 million, was $54 million (34 per cent) less than the medium-term plan amount of $160 million and $57 million (35 per cent) less than the amount of $163 million UNICEF received in 1995.

C. Greeting Card and related Operations

126. GCO continued to be a very significant source of income for UNICEF. Net income from the sale of cards and other products and private sector fund-raising through greeting cards and other related operations in 1996 generated $150 million for general resources, compared to $145 million in 1995. Supplementary funds from the private sector/non-governmental sources reached $150 million. The Fund-raising Development Programme and the Market Development Programme continue to provide support in identifying and testing new opportunities to increase sales volume of greeting cards and to develop new distribution channels. They also enable the UNICEF network of National Committees to recruit new donors in support of UNICEF activities.

127. More details on GCO can be found in the GCO financial report and statements for the year ended 30 April 1996 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.9) and the GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1997 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.8), both of which are before the Board at the present session.

D. Overall expenditure

128. In 1996, total expenditure amounted to $921 million. In addition, there were write-offs and other charges amounting to $15 million (see table 3 below). Total expenditure for 1996 was $97 million less than the medium-term plan

amount. Expenditure for management and administration in 1996 amounting to $97 million was about equal to the 1995 amount and $11 million less than the projected amount in the 1996 medium-term plan. Programme cooperation accounted for $824 million or 88 per cent, including $684 million for direct assistance to programmes and $140 million for programme support services.

Table 3. Expenditure by type of input

(In millions of United States dollars)

	1993	1994	1995	1996
Programme cooperation				
Supplies and equipment (including freight)	359	334	330	262
Cash and other assistance	445	467	474	422
Programme support services	93	99	108	140 a/
Subtotal	897	900	912	824
Management and administration	87	91	99	97
Write-offs and other charge	13	8	11	15
Total	997	999	1 022	936

a/ As of 1996, global funds, which were previously included under supply and cash assistance, are integrated into the budget for headquarters and regional offices (see E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.5 and Corr.1).

129. The detailed financial results for 1996 will be contained in the interim financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1996 (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.11, to be submitted to the Executive Board at its third regular session in September 1997. The medium-term plan provides the framework of financial projections for 1996-1999 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10).

E. Programme expenditure

130. UNICEF cooperated with 161 countries in 1996, comprising 46 in Africa, 37 in the Americas and the Caribbean, 33 in Asia, 18 in MENA and 27 in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States. This includes 14 Caribbean and 13 Pacific island countries, 5 countries in the Middle East and 11 in Central and Eastern Europe and Baltic States which were supported either through multi-country programme recommendations or from funds for regional activities. Figure I provides a breakdown of programme expenditure by programme sector, showing that the major share of expenditure continued to be in the health sector.

131. In 1996, expenditures in emergency activities amounted to $145 million (21 per cent) as compared to $203 million (25 per cent) in 1995. Figure II shows the breakdown of programme expenditures in emergencies. The major expenditures in emergencies continued to be in the area of health. However, in 1996, there was a substantial increase in programme expenditures related to

children in need of special protection. This accounts for the increase in expenditures in other programme areas from 10 per cent in 1995 to 13 per cent in 1996.

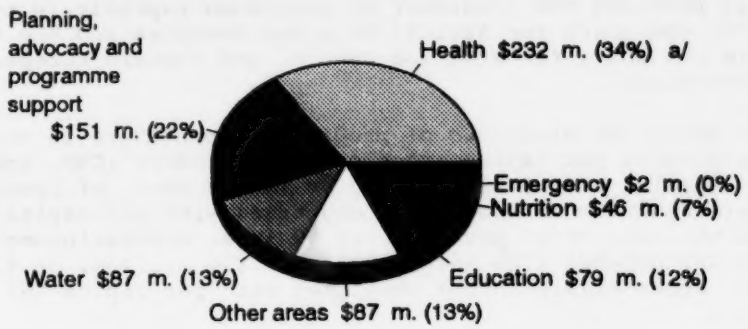
132. Figure III provides the breakdown of programme expenditure by geographical region. In 1996, the share for Africa, Asia and Americas and the Caribbean increased, while the share for MENA and Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States decreased.

133. The annex shows the breakdown of programme expenditure in countries classified according to per capita gross national product (GNP) and under-five mortality rate (U5MR). Some $479 million, or 70 per cent, of programme expenditures were spent in 65 low-income countries with per capita GNP of $725 and below; $132 million, or 19 per cent, in 49 lower middle-income countries with per capita GNP between $726 and $2,895; and $36 million, or 5 per cent, were spent in 11 upper middle-income countries with per capita GNP between $2,896 and $8,955.

Figure I

UNICEF Programme expenditure

by programme field, including emergency expenditures, 1996


Planning, advocacy and programme support $151 m. (22%)
Health $232 m. (34%) a/
Emergency $2 m. (0%)
Nutrition $46 m. (7%)
Education $79 m. (12%)
Other areas $87 m. (13%)
Water $87 m. (13%)

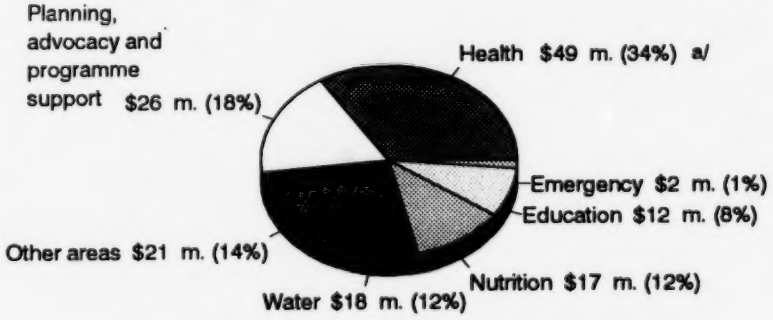
Total expenditure: $684 million

a/ Health includes EPI, $79 million; ORT, $4 million; and other health, $149 million.

Figure II

UNICEF programme expenditure

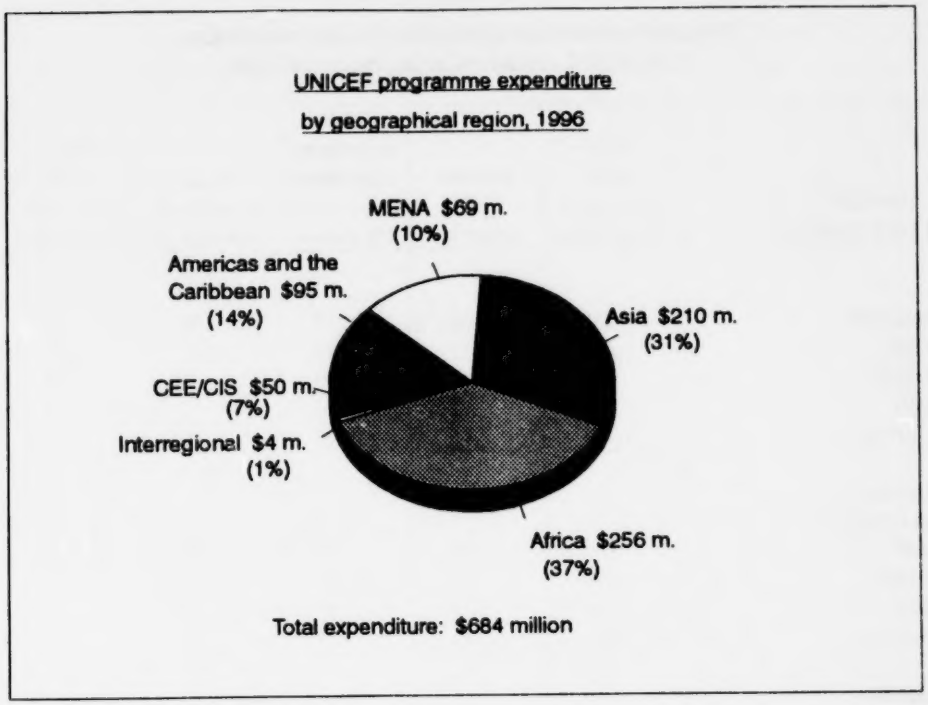
on emergency and rehabilitation by programme field, 1996


Planning, advocacy and programme support $26 m. (18%)
Health $49 m. (34%) a/
Emergency $2 m. (1%)
Education $12 m. (8%)
Other areas $21 m. (14%)
Nutrition $17 m. (12%)
Water $18 m. (12%)

Total expenditure: $145 million

a/ Health includes EPI, $15 million; ORT, $1 million; and other health, $33 million.

Figure III


UNICEF programme expenditure
by geographical region, 1996
MENA $69 m.
(10%)
Americas and the
Caribbean $95 m.
(14%)
Asia $210 m.
(31%)
CEE/CIS $50 m.
(7%)
Interregional $4 m.
(1%)
Africa $256 m.
(37%)
Total expenditure: $684 million

Annex

Programme expenditure for countries classified according to gross national product and under-five mortality rate

1994 GNP and 1995 U5MR a/	1995 child population (In millions)	Number of countries	1996 programme expenditure (In millions of US dollars)	Total expenditure (Percentage)	Total child population (Percentage)	Cents per child (US cents)
Low income						
Very high U5MR	258	31	218	32	14	84
High U5MR	604	21	195	29	32	60 b/
Middle U5MR	454	11	50	7	24	42 c/
Low U5MR	7	2	16	2	0	-- d/
Subtotal	1 323	65	479	70	70	51 e/
Lower middle income						
Very high U5MR	0	1	1	0	0	-- d/
High U5MR	109	10	53	8	6	49
Middle U5MR	277	31	68	10	15	25
Low U5MR	25	7	10	1	1	40
Subtotal	411	49	132	19	22	32
Upper middle income						
Very high U5MR	1	1	1	0	0	-- d/
High U5MR	0	0	0	0	0	--
Middle U5MR	137	7	33	5	7	24
Low U5MR	19	3	2	0	1	8
Subtotal	157	11	36	5	8	23
Total for countries:	1 891	125 g/	647	95	100	36
Total for global and other regional funds:			37	5		
Grand Total:			684	100		
(of which LDCs)	(365)	(43)	(303)	(44)	(19)	83

a/ Low income = GNP per capita of $725 or less.
Lower middle income = GNP per capita between $726 and $2,895.
Upper middle income = GNP per capita between $2,896 and $8,955.
Very high U5MR = Over 140 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.
High U5MR = 71-140 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.
Middle U5MR = 21-70 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.
Low U5MR = less than 21 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.
LDCs = least developed countries.

b/ Cents per child was calculated excluding India.
c/ Cents per child was calculated excluding China.
d/ Cents per child was not calculated for groupings with very small child population in order not to distort the picture.
e/ Cents per child was calculated excluding India and China.
f/ Pacific and Caribbean Islands were counted as one each.